

THE THIRD ROME

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INTRODUCTION

This little study is but a small attempt to be faithful to the command of the Lord Jesus Christ to:

“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

Luke 21:36

Yes, I realize that that Scripture may have other applications, yet surely it is incumbent upon us to “*discern the signs of the times*” (*Matt. 16:3*). There are indeed many Scriptures that encourage us to ‘watch and be alert’.

So, let’s do some ‘watching’! There are many facts about modern Russia, and also its history, of which few people are aware, and especially of which Christians SHOULD BE made aware! Therefore, maybe this little study will challenge some thinking and some serious study of the Scriptures in an effort to see ‘if these things be so’ (see *Acts 17:11*).

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

If any man have an ear, let him hear."

Revelation 13:1-9

THE THIRD ROME

Let me here first take the time to share that I consider it important that Christians are not as informed as they should be about the growing evils which threaten our nation. We need to be informed enough to warn and help others, but we should not get caught up in and preoccupied with the symptoms of a sick society rather than majoring on solutions. We need to become preoccupied with Christ and His Word!

Moreover, we need to consider some of the most commonly accepted errors being taught by teachers of Bible prophecy in these times. I have read that it has been said that "No truth is more certain in Bible prophecy than the revival of the old Roman Empire. . . For centuries, the vast majority of Bible scholars have steadfastly believed that the upcoming Anti-Christ will arise out of the Revived Roman Empire." It has been said "tradition sticks worse than sin." It appears that it is easier for Bible scholars and teachers to continue the traditions of the past than to study afresh what the Word of God teaches. As a result, the Christian church world is in much confusion and division.

There is a Latin phrase, *tertium quid*, which means "a third way." I sometimes believe that if more Christians would consider the possibility that there is "a third way" many of the confusions would have a chance of evaporating. In the case of this concept of the "revival of the old Roman Empire" there IS a third view that must be considered to arrive at the truth of the Word of God.

Ask yourself this question: is it possible that there is indeed a revival of the old Roman Empire in our midst today? Again, is it possible that all of the prophecies attributed to such an Empire and/or Ten Nation consortium (Common Market, etc.) could be correct but attributed to the wrong entity? And, just why do Bible scholars limit the revival of the old Roman Empire to the nations of Western Christendom or Italy and do not include the nations of Eastern Europe? These and other questions become critical in getting to the truth of the matter and clearing up a lot of erroneous concepts regarding Christ's Second Coming and the events leading up to that glorious moment.

I do not intend to cover this subject in detail, but for those who would like to study the subject in more depth, write in to us for a booklet by Leland Earls entitled *REVIVED ROMAN EMPIRE – FACT OR FICTION?* also partially included in the April 1999 *CHAT*. It is an excellent book. I will be drawing from it time to time to discuss the subject before us, but not in full.

“The Third Rome” – what does that title imply? Well, for one thing it means that there must have been two entities preceding the third which were also referred to as “Rome.” There were. The first was, of course, Rome itself under the Caesars. As the original Roman Empire began to break up and Christianity began to grow in influence within that old empire, Christians carried their religion throughout the provinces of that Empire and even beyond. After the final fall of Rome, the ecclesiastical leaders eventually emerged as the leaders of the remainder of the secular state of Rome and its holdings – some even taking unto themselves many of the previous titles of Roman rulers, i.e. Pontiff Maximus. The newly emerging secular state became known as the Holy Roman Empire with the Popes crowning the Emperors in return for such allegiance to the designs of Holy Rome. Several books have been written on this dark and ugly era of the Christian church. As we

know, this later led to the Reformation and the mighty efforts of Martin Luther and others.

Whence the Third Rome? There is a little known fact of history which is critical for Christians to understand in regard to accurately identifying the location of the final end-time Beast and his empire. It is my conviction that THE Anti-Christ will arrive from this empire, but that it is not to be found in the geographical area that we presently call Western Europe. Rather, this MAN will come from the Eastern region of Europe and specifically, an area which is a part of the former Soviet Union! This will be shown as we proceed.

Let us first look at the traditional “rationale” that the end-time “beast” power will be a “revived Roman Empire.” Here I would like to quote extensively from Leland Earls’ study:

“The Prophet Daniel, one of the Jewish exiles in Babylon, was given a dream-vision by God (**Dan. 7**) of four great beasts that arose out of the sea. He was given to understand that these beasts represented four *Gentile world empires* which would *exercise dominion* over the civilized world (and over the Jews) *until* the Messiah would come (the ‘**Son of man**’ – **7:13**): *then* He would receive the dominion, glory and kingdom, and all peoples, nations and languages would serve Him (**7:14**). The four world-empires represented by the four beasts were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Rome (the fourth and last) held sway and also dominated the Holy Land when Jesus the Messiah came into the world. Prophecy students ‘reasoned’ that since Daniel’s beasts out of the sea were but *FOUR* (no more), that there would be *no other* world kingdom arising. But since other prophecies give evidence (especially **Rev. 13**) there is to be an end-time kingdom of global scope before Jesus’ second coming, it was concluded that such would have to be a *revived* Roman one (in order not to make a fifth).

“Now I will point out the error of this concept, as well as to give the Scriptural answer to this dilemma. When the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, God expected them to bring forth ‘fruit’: both for ‘home consumption’ and for ‘export’. When Jesus the Messiah came, it was time for ‘harvest’; HE came looking for fruit, but found none (**Lk. 13:6-9**). Moreover, the ‘keepers’ (stewards) of the Kingdom-vineyard, cast Him out and killed Him (**Matt. 21:33-41**). ‘He came unto His own, and His own received Him not’ (**Jn. 1:11**). *Had* His own people *accepted* Him, the *fullness* of the covenant (and Kingdom) would have been theirs to reap, and the Messiah-Deliverer (and Judge) would have dispatched the Roman legions, and the FOURTH (the Roman) kingdom would have been the LAST Gentile world empire. But a righteous God could not bring judgment upon a Gentile people who knew Him not, when His own chosen people slew and cast Him out. So He ‘lifted’ the Kingdom-stewardship ‘mantle’ from Abraham’s seed after the flesh and placed it upon the spiritual heirs of the promise, even the seed and children of Abraham by FAITH (**Gal. 3:7,9,29**), who *WOULD bring forth fruit* desired by the vineyard-owner (God), in time (*‘in their seasons’* – **Matt. 21:41**), which would involve a period of about 2,000 years. *Accordingly* ‘judgment’ *ALSO* had to *wait* for the Gentiles (the Roman Empire and other Gentile nations which would arise); as well as *final* judgment on the Jew.

“NOW, in order to get the FULL and FINAL picture of world events before Christ returns, and of the FINAL FORM of Gentile world power which God will judge, we must go to the New Testament to the **Book of Revelation**, in which we have *added revelation* given by the glorified Christ *beyond* that which was seen by Daniel. The ‘Revived Roman Empire’ theorists saw the ‘beast’ of **Revelation 13** as ‘Rome revived’ with the 10 horns of **Revelation 13:1** the same as the 10 horns of **Daniel 7:20,24**, postulating a union of 10

nations of western Europe (in the geographical area of the old Roman Empire), and which is finding its fulfillment in what was known as the 'Common Market' but now called the European Union (E.U.). This, they said was the final beast over which the Anti-Christ will rule. The absolute fallacy of this thinking will be shown as we proceed. I often ask the question: 'If the Jewish Prophets were given the total picture of God's prophetic plan of the future, why would Jesus (the greatest Prophet of all) be given additional details recorded in the **Book of Revelation (Rev. 1:1)**'?

"First, just because Daniel's fourth beast had ten horns (**Dan. 7:7,20,24**), and John's beast of **Revelation 13** also has ten horns (**Rev. 13:1**) does not make the latter the 'revival' of the former. A careful examination of the **Revelation 13** beast shows vast differences from Daniel's fourth beast. However, the 'latter day stage' of what has been a long evolutionary process of the 'Roman Empire' IS INVOLVED in John's beast of **Revelation 13**, but NOT in the sense that is postulated by the 'revived Roman Empire' theorists.

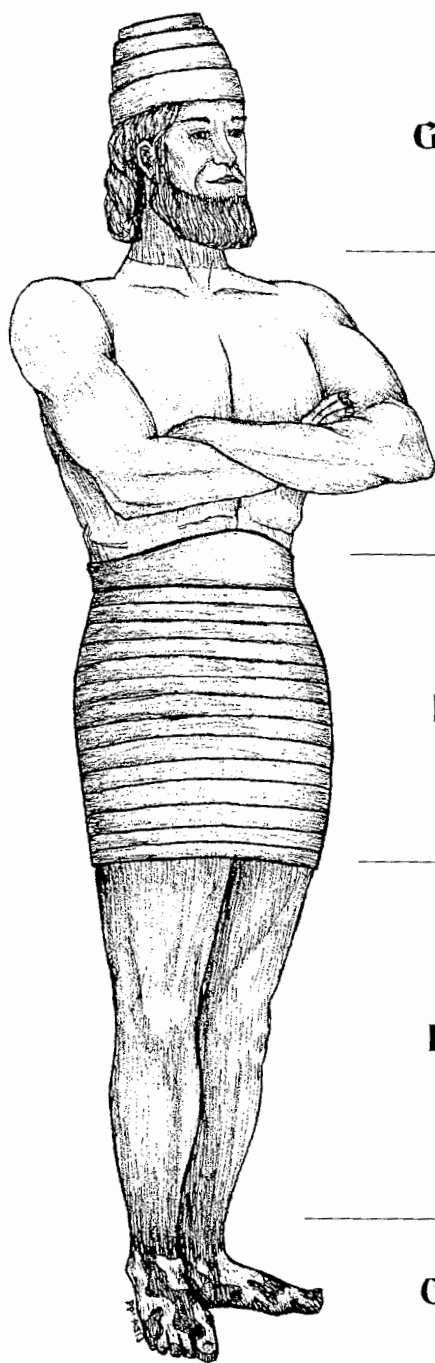
"Secondly, in **Revelation 13**, we actually see two beasts. After describing the first in **Revelation 13:1-10**, John says in **13:11 'and I beheld another beast'**. A careful examination shows the second is merely a 'front' for the first, and thus in a sense they are ONE powerful beastly force with ONE and the same aim, varying only in tactics. Yet, because John says 'another beast', for the sake of 'count' we must distinguish the two. When we 'add up' by count the four beasts of Daniel's vision, and the two beasts of John's vision, we have a total of six. In God's symbolic language, '6' is the number of MAN. (Adam was created on the 6th day; in the Law, God gave man 6 days to do all *his work*, etc.). So it is not unusual that during the historical period known as the '**times of the Gentiles**' (**Lk. 21:24**), which

began when Babylon (the first of Daniel's four beasts **Dan. 7:4**) took Jerusalem under king Nebuchadnezzar and *initiated* Jerusalem's 'treading down', until the '**fullness of the Gentiles be come in**' (**Rom. 11:25**) at the close of this age, that there are six Gentile beast powers which *have had* or **will have** their part in the 'treading down' of Jerusalem.

"Third, to understand how the 'Roman Empire' fits into the end-time beast picture, we must go back into history and understand that there actually was a 'revival' of the Roman Empire that is with us even to this day. In addition, we will never understand the end-time role of Rome until we are made aware of the fact that in its 'evolutionary development' the Roman Empire became divided into two distinct parts: the *Western* Roman Empire and the *Eastern* Roman Empire. This is pictured by the *two legs* of iron in the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream which Daniel interpreted as recorded in **Daniel 2**. This division took place in the Fourth century A.D. The Empire had become so vast in size, that effective administration of its more distant provinces became increasingly difficult. Therefore, under the reign of Constantine, the Eastern Division, or Greek-Roman Empire was formed. Its capitol was Constantinople (named after Constantine) and was located in what is present day Turkey. The present name of the city is Istanbul. Eventually, along the same lines of division between the western and eastern sections of the Roman Empire was the *church divided*. Basically, it involved the rise of the 'Papacy', to which the Eastern Church would not submit.

"Now we are ready for the KEY to the question of 'Rome', its 'revival', its historical development, and HOW it fits into the end-time pattern of prophetic events and the 'Beast' system. In the 4th and 5th centuries, the Western Roman Empire showed increasing signs of decay. The populace, softened by luxurious living, had lost its one-time vigor.

ILLUSTRATION/EXPLANATIONS OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM



Gold

Silver

Bronze

Iron

Clay & Iron

DANIEL 2

(The dates given are approximate.)

Gold

Egypt's oppression – 1600 B.C.

Assyria – deportation – 700 B.C.

Babylon rule of Judah – 606 B.C.

GOLD: wealth, spiritual wealth. Also the work and impartation of the spirit world. Refined gold is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Fall of Jerusalem – 586 B.C.

Daniel – 605-534 B.C.

Jeremiah – 600 B.C.

Silver

Medo-Persian rule – 538 B.C.

SILVER: less material wealth, soul qualities. Also the need for the work of redemption.

Nehemiah – 450 B.C.

Bronze

Grecian conquest – 333 B.C.

Empire divided – 328 B.C.

BRONZE: less material wealth, knowledge of earthly things. Also learning and philosophy of man. When refined, it is spiritual knowledge and wisdom.

Iron

Rome conquers Israel – 64 B.C.

Pagan Roman Empire split – 44 B.C.

IRON: more earthy, emphasis on materialism. Also authority and raw power, carnal, ruthless, crushing – as in the God-rejecting countries of communism. Refined, it is God's power in His prepared Sons.

Christ's birth – 1 A.D.

Christ's personal ministry – 31-35 A.D.

His ministry continued to the rulers of the Jews by the Apostles into 38 A.D.

Then Stephan's death concluded the 7 year contract.

Clay & Iron

Pagan Roman Empire broken – 313 A.D.

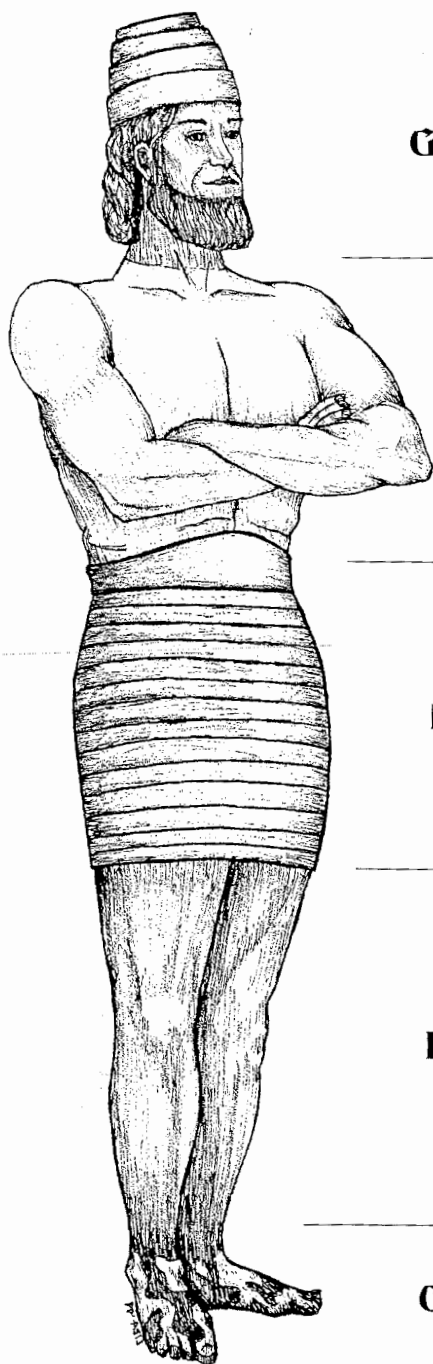
Revived as “Christian” Rome – 313-500 A.D. in an amalgamation of pagan ritual and peoples. The Holy Roman Empire influence spreads far beyond the empire boundaries (just as “spiritual Israel” has done). As a result, Christendom included Russia. The USSR remains an heir to the heritage of the “Iron” empire and beast, even though its form has changed from that of Christendom.

The Holy Roman empire splits – 700-1054 A.D.

The Reformation (Luther et al.) – 1520 A.D.

CLAY: more earthy, the advance of human knowledge in humanism, self-attainment elevating man through science, technology and learning – ousting God. It is impossible to combine political power and authority with materialism in a stable mixture. It is unstable, prone to fragmentation, requiring a dictatorial rule. Represents weakness also. But the Lord takes weakness and refines it into ruling power (the rod of iron) an into righteousness.

At the close of The Great Tribulation, the “Stone” will crush the whole image (Gold through Clay) into worthless chaff, which will utterly blow away.



Gold

Silver

Bronze

Iron

Clay & Iron

DANIEL 7

Lion

Bear

Leopard

Dreadful Beast

DANIEL 9

Cyrus – 540 B.C.

Cyrus' proclamation – 536 B.C.

New Temple dedication – 516 B.C.

Artaxerxes letters to build walls etc. – 445 B.C.

69 weeks equates to 483 years

483 years of 360 days is 476 years of 365 days.

476 years of 365 day years – 31 A.D. – Christ's preparation after 1 A.D.

445 B.C. – the time of Artaxerxes' letters to rebuild.

(The 360 day-year because it was to bring the kingdom within man.)

483 of 365 day years – 38 A.D. – completion of 7 year offering – 445 B.C.

(The 365 day year because it was to bring the Kingdom to the nation.)

The strengthened Contract *specifically with the nation of Israel*, to be in force for 7 years.

The offer of Christ Himself 31-35 A.D., then Apostles to rulers – 35-38 A.D.

Judah set aside – 38 A.D.

Jerusalem destroyed and the Jews dispersed – 70 A.D.

Jesus born July, August 1 A.D.

31.5 A.D. September, October – anointing –

**The
Dreadful Beast
in partnership
with 10 rulers**

30 years old *Luke 3:23*

32 Passover *John 2:13* 30.58

35 Passover 33.58

38.5 October Stephan

Spiritual Israel picks up the heritage or mantle of physical Israel and is no longer confined to the boundaries of Palestine.

Christ's personal ministry to His chosen people of physical Israel has already fulfilled the second $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of *personal* ministry to *spiritual* Israel through the Manifested Sons (He was the first such Son), during the $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of Great Tribulation on a rebellious world.

War-like tribes from the north swept down, making devastating inroads. Though Rome tried to ward off her assailants, her foes gave her no respite and in 476 A.D., the Imperial Empire passed into history.

"However, at the same time that Imperial Rome was decaying, simultaneously a new power was rising within her borders. The Church, headed by the Papacy, was becoming a great organized religious, ecclesiastical and political force. The 'irony' (if, indeed, that is a proper word to use; perhaps 'tragedy' would be a more apt description) of the spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire, and the eventual recognition of it as an 'accepted' religion was followed swiftly by Constantine's elevation of Christianity as the 'official' religion of the Roman Empire. And, the 'adulterous marriage' of church and state was the fact that not only did the church 'Christianize' Rome, but in process of time, Rome '*Romanized*' the church!

"Long before Imperial Rome fell, the church was *increasingly taking the form, the accouterments, the trappings*; yes, even many of the *doctrines, practices and customs* of the pagan Roman Empire. Its ecclesiastical hierarchy was in the 'image' or likeness of the political structure of Rome, even to the vesting of one man (akin to the Emperor) with the supreme authority over the church – the 'Pontifex Maximus' – the 'chief' of all the priests of the hierarchical structure, called the 'Pope' (papa). Here we are ready to relate what happened when Imperial Rome fell."

For those more interested in the details of what happened when Imperial Rome fell, please just write in for this important study. (Request the book on the **REVIVED ROMAN EMPIRE** by Leland Earls.)

So, we see that Rome at its disintegration as a secular empire became a new "ecclesiastical empire" – the Holy Ro-

man Empire. Shortly thereafter, a division took place within that empire which separated the influence of the empire between the East and West. Historians will tell us that this division followed along the lines of the power centers that had already been established within the old secular Roman Empire. That is, Rome had divided its power centers between Rome (proper) and the new center of Constantinople which became known as the Byzantine Empire or Byzantium. Constantine had been instrumental in establishing Christianity as the official state religion and Constantinople was Constantine's new center for the Roman Empire.

During the fifth and sixth centuries, the Western or Latin half of the Roman Empire structure began to collapse. However, through the expansion of Christianity, the Roman culture persisted and spread into regions and among peoples which had never acknowledged the control of Rome. This continued at such a rate, that by 1500, Rome, as the seat of the head of the Latin-using branch of Christianity in Western Europe, held spiritual sway over a greater area than had ever been dominated by the rule of the Caesars (in that particular part of the continent).

Through the extensive spread of Christianity, the basin of the Mediterranean persisted as a center for the culture of the Roman Empire for some centuries longer. Until 1453 a succession of monarchs ruled from Constantinople (although from various houses) who considered themselves the legitimate heirs of the Empire which once had its seat on the seven hills by the Tiber. Long after Roman secular dominion had faded north of the Alps, they continued to control not only large areas of the Mediterranean area, but also large portions of North Africa, Sicily, Italy and Spain. During most of the 6th century this truncated, yet still imposing, Roman Empire, shared with Persia the honor of being the most powerful realm on the face of the earth. Even for centuries thereafter, it was

one of the then ‘superpowers’.

Yet something was happening in the East also. Through the Byzantine Empire, Christianity was also spreading, albeit much slower. Its greatest obstacle seems to have been the rise of Islam!

However, the Byzantine Empire, following the model of Rome, esteemed religion of prime importance to its political purposes. In a large measure, it controlled the Church and made it an organ of the state. In the West, when the collapse of the Roman rule happened, organized Christianity was better able to emancipate itself from the temporal powers of the state. In the West the struggle between Church and state was a more equal contest than that which took place in the East. The Christian impulse enjoyed larger freedom of expression in the West probably because of its greater vigor. In the West, missions arose more from spontaneous efforts rather than state initiated causes. But in the East, it is significant that a very large part of the major missionary undertakings were initiated or actively aided by the Byzantine state.

Christianity had a smaller place in the life of the eastern section of Europe as compared with the western section. Even though the East thought of itself as Christian and gloried in its orthodoxy, yet the old structure of pre-Christian Greco-Roman life persisted in the East with not so much as an interlude or break as had happened in the West. It is therefore important to realize that the Roman culture (through the Greek influence) was even more predominant in the East than in the West. Let us look at a passage in Daniel which suggests that the root of the tree would not be removed.

“And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.”

Daniel 4:26

This seems to indicate that the stump with the roots of the tree means that the image of the beast which began with Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon and continued through the empires of Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, was to continue – UNBROKEN – right up and into the latter days! And thus we see that in both the West and East, the Greco-Roman influence did continue and does continue with us, BUT that it was stronger in its influence and character in the East rather than in the West. This is an important point to remember when we consider a 'revived Rome' concept.

Wherefore, we have glimpsed into the history of Rome and its revival through Christianity. Just as with the two legs of the image of the beast mentioned in Daniel, we are given to see that they were made of iron and the feet were of iron mingled with clay (*Dan. 2:33*). Rome had two legs, East and West, and later it began to walk (the feet with *iron and clay*) throughout the East and West. Iron was associated with the Roman Empire as bronze was associated with the Greek culture. How marvelous are the patterns that God has revealed for us in His Word.

For centuries an outward show of unity was maintained between the Latin Christianity of the West and the Greek Christianity of the East. The Popes and Bishops of Rome had official relations with the monarchs who reigned from Constantinople for hundreds of years. As the light-bearers of the Roman Empire, the Emperors in Constantinople were sought out by the Popes for confirmation of their election. However, as time passed, the connection of Latin Christianity with the Eastern Empire, and with its eastern wing of what had become known as the Catholic Church, became more superficial and the relationship grew more strained.

Formal schism between the two branches occurred repeatedly. But the final break came in 1054 A.D. when the civil authorities commenced to close the Latin churches in

Constantinople and Papal legates formally pronounced excommunication against the Eastern Church. Subsequent tries at reunion failed or were of brief duration and the 'taking of sides' commenced in earnest until most Greek-speaking or Hellenistically influenced communities and peoples became associated with what came to be known as the Orthodox churches. Others went over to the side of the Latin churches which became known as the Roman Catholic Church. How ironic that they should incorporate the Roman name, when, in fact, the Eastern church and culture was more strongly influenced by the Roman Empire through Byzantium over a longer period of time.

Yet God wanted to leave us with patterns by which to understand His Word as events began to develop. It is of note also that several historians have traced the first inhabitants of the area that became known as Babylonia and Ur of the Chaldees as having originated in the Ural mountains which are a part of the former Soviet Union! Is it in error to believe that at the destruction and further disintegration of the old Babylonian Empire many of its inhabitants would have trekked back to their native Urals?! It is my opinion that some of that stump and root of Nebuchadnezzar remains in portions of the peoples who now inhabit the former Soviet Union. This thought becomes even more important when we consider the verdict of history. Let me here quote from *A THOUSAND YEARS OF UNCERTAINTY* by Kenneth Scott Latourette (pg. 258):

"Shortly before the Mongol conquest, the tie of the Russian Church with Constantinople had been weakened by the capture of that city by the Crusaders and by the short-lived Latin Empire. The seat of the Metropolitan was eventually moved to Moscow, much farther from Constantinople and hence less under the influence of the Ecumenical Patriarch than when it was at Kiev. In Russia, therefore, the Orthodox Church came to be looked upon as the one insti-

tution in which all who were ruled by the Mongols could unite. For the Russian, the word Christian held a national significance.

The average peasant probably did not know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments. Yet peasant and noble took pride in the names "Orthodox" and "Christian," and Russia became "Holy Russia." When in 1453 Constantinople passed into the hands of the Turks, the Russian Church and princes felt themselves to have succeeded the Byzantine Empire as the champions of Orthodox Christianity. *Moscow had become the 'Third Rome'.*!!!! (Emphasis mine – J.R.W.)

There you have it! Moscow became known as THE THIRD ROME! With such a remark can we not at once see the great error committed by those who have arbitrarily confined any 'revival of the Roman Empire' to the nations of Western Europe? Can we not entertain the fact that rather than straining ourselves to believe that Italy or the Vatican will somehow become a superpower to compete with the giants of the U.S.A. – that we should look elsewhere for the fulfillment of Scripture? Can we not consider that the Scripture which states that the man of sin cannot come unless "there come a falling away (apostasy) first" (*II Thess. 2:3*), saw its preliminary fulfillment in the apostasy of most of the countries under the influence of the Eastern Church? With the exception of Greece, all countries which were formerly under the influence of the Eastern church apostasized to Communism! (Asia Minor was taken over by the Turks at the fall of Byzantium and later became known as Turkey.) Each of those formerly Christian countries at one time or another wore the "*name of blasphemy*" (*Rev. 13:1*) – the banner of Atheism – "There is no God!" or accepted the false prophet of Islam! That paves the way for the man of sin! (Even modern Greece has embraced Socialism, which is a half step away from God-rejecting Communism.)

This pattern of the ‘apostasy’ will probably see a more literal fulfillment, but we would be in error to overlook this one. The man of sin will be against God and all that is called God.

“And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His Name, and His Tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.”

Revelation 13:6

Shall we not consider the potential that he will come from one of the former Eastern Orthodox countries – and even from within the Beast Empire itself – Russia?! Let us not look for the Pope to become the head of a secular nuclear power (even though he may come to exercise much influence). But rather, let us rightly divide the Scriptures. Moscow can just as easily fulfill the connection to the Old Rome; and any country formerly under the influence of the Eastern Branch of Christianity must also be considered when we think of the 10 horned confederacy. Such would include Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, states of former Yugoslavia, the Ukraine, Russia and others. Each were formerly “Christian” and each embraced God-rejecting Communism.

It has been said: “Those nations are the most distinguished for justice and kindness in which the Bible is best known and Christianity most pure.” There is much history to lend credibility to that statement. Look out upon the nations of the former Eastern Orthodox influenced countries. All but Greece became Communist (and as already mentioned, Greece has been strongly influenced by Socialist governments). Then look out upon the nations where Roman Catholicism has been the predominant religion or brand of Christianity. Poland, former Czechoslovakia, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal and others. In most of those countries, we see that Socialism made great headway (Poland and former Czechoslovakia – having also accepted Communism at one point in their history). Then

come the unstable countries of Central and South America, which are predominantly Roman Catholic. Only when we view the countries where the effects of the Protestant Reformation has had the most influence can we behold the fact that, until recent years, they have been the strongest and most stable democracies of the world, where justice and kindness were a way of life. Yes, I realize that recent decades have seen that greatly eroded, but that has been proportionate to the great liberal tilt within the mainline church structure of Protestant Christianity. In other words, our Christianity is not now nearly so pure or vigorous. What a shame that we have not seen and beheld the verdict of God and history!

With that thought in mind, I feel impelled to share one other historical fact about the Eastern and Western branches of Christianity, in light of the record that it was the more impure form of the Eastern Orthodox branch which first apostasized. Let me again quote from *A THOUSAND YEARS OF UNCERTAINTY* (pg. 226):

"The East used leavened bread in the Eucharist; the West unleavened."!

Shall we consider Jesus' words and fail to consider the reality of the fact that God uses symbols to 'speak to us'?

"Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."

Matthew 16:6

"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

Luke 12:1

And from Paul's exhortation to the people in Corinth:

"Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"

I Corinthians 5:6

Is it not astounding that that which was practiced as a common ritual by the Eastern church – the use of leavened bread – was dramatized more fully in their national life and character? Leavening speaks of corruption and it has been said that the Eastern church was indeed more corrupt in its materialism than that which has been seen in the West. That is hard to believe when we consider the lives of the Popes during the Dark Ages, but we must take history as a whole and consider the Reformation and the many revivals within the Western branch which helped to purify and correct many of the excesses of its hierarchy.

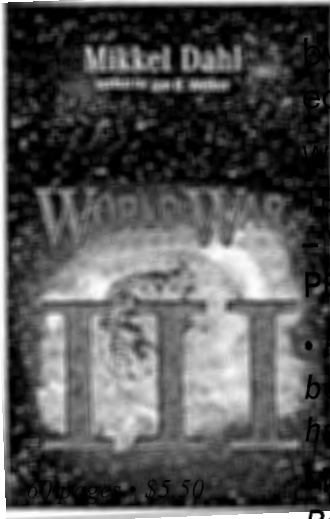
Dear reader, there is so much that could be shared about the vindication of God's Word in the march of the events of history, but I have already gone beyond my original desire to present a brief treatise. For those of you who would like some more detailed studies regarding this area of church history, please write to us for the study already mentioned, by Leland Earls, *THE REVIVED ROMAN EMPIRE*.

In addition to that comprehensive study, we have books on related subjects that cover the idea of the 'man of sin', and the Beast Empire. Request such books as:

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by Mikkel Dahl
edited by Jon R. Welker

Why, WHY,
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— Why CAN WE NOT LIVE IN
PEACE?

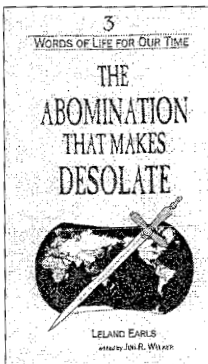
• *Has the Communist Hammer
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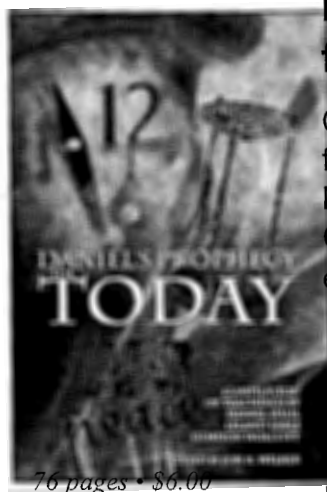
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